

Attorney's Docket No.: 07977/076003

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above referenced application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Funai in view of Hoga. This contention is respectfully traversed. The rejection apparently contends that Funai teaches cleaning the surface of the crystalline semiconductor film and also applying a laser beam to the crystalline semiconductor film. This contention is apparently based on column 44 line 41 through column 45 line 48. However, it is respectfully suggested that this overstates the teaching of Funai. Funai merely discloses that after removing the silicon oxide film and the nickel thin film, that a XeCl excimer laser light is radiated. This is apparently done to improve the crystallinity of the crystalline silicon film. Because this happens, it appears that Funai does not teach cleaning the surface of the semiconductor film prior to the crystallization. Furthermore, Hoga teaches crystallization by a irradiating the laser beam in a nitrogen atmosphere see column 2 lines 53-58. Again, and very similar to Funai, it is respectfully suggested that there is no disclosure of a cleaning step prior to the crystallization.

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Therefore, it is respectfully suggested that no matter how combined, neither Funai, nor Hoga, nor the combination thereof, teach or suggest cleaning the surface of the semiconductor film and then crystallizing the semiconductor film by irradiating the laser beam. For these reasons, it is respectfully suggested that the rejection of these claims is incorrect, and should be withdrawn.

In addition, however, and in an attempt to further distinguish over the prior art, claims 1 and 13 have been amended to recite cleaning the surface of the semiconductor film and applying the laser beam to the cleaned surface of the semiconductor film in order to form a crystalline semiconductor film in a nitrogen atmosphere. Furthermore, in response to the rejection of claims 4-6, 10-12 and 16-18, claims 4, 10 and 16 have been amended to recite preheating the semiconductor film to form an oxide film. These claims are also amended to recite applying a laser beam to the semiconductor film through the oxide film. In Funai, the oxide film appears to be removed prior to applying the laser beam, see column 45 lines 39-43. Therefore, this amendment further obviates the rejection.

Claims 7, 19, and 23 as well as 4, 10 and 16 have also been amended to further obviate the rejection under section 103 based on Funai and Hoga, and to recite preheating the semiconductor

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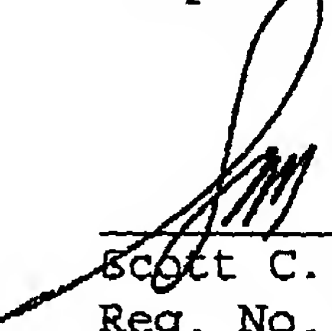
film to form an oxide film, and applying the laser beam to the semiconductor film through the oxide film.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, therefore, all of the claims should be in condition for allowance. A formal notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.


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Respectfully submitted,

Date: 04/14/03



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